Parasitology

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Professor R. Stephen Phillips, Journal Editor (2000–2020)

J. Russell Stothard

Department of Tropical Disease Biology, Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine, Liverpool, L3 5QA, UK

Editorial

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Author for correspondence:
J. Russell Stothard,
E-mail: Russell.Stothard@lstmed.ac.uk

Upon the close of Tuesday 30th June 2020, a personal milestone was reached that warrants special mention here. It marked the formal retirement of Professor Stephen Phillips as Editor-in-Chief of *Parasitology* and with it our sincere thanks for his longstanding association with the journal. The origin of this association approaches 60 years; it formally began in 1967 upon publication of his first abstract from a British Society for Parasitology presentation on *Babesia*. A later clutch of papers in *Parasitology* appeared, with one also in *Nature*, arising from his doctoral investigation at the University of Cambridge, entitled '*Studies on* Babesia rodhaini *in laboratory animals*'.

Some 60 years before, *Parasitology* itself was founded in 1908 by Professor George Nuttall, also at Cambridge, as an off-shoot publication from the *Journal of Hygiene*. This was in response to the rising number of parasite-specific manuscripts he was receiving. As many readers realize, Stephen has been at the editorial helm of *Parasitology* for the past 20 years consecutively, a convenient division in sixth of the very existence of the journal itself. This places him as most long-standing editor in recent years, pipped only in the post by George himself and his erstwhile PhD student, Professor David Keilin, each giving 25 and 29 years of service, respectively.

Times of service aside, through the many technological revolutions of the 21st Century, Stephen's steady hand and open-mindedness have helped the journal better navigate equally through opportunity or challenge, as adeptly as any of the 11 previous editors before. Stephen's interest and expertise in parasitology grew from a firm foundation of Zoology gained at University College London, first enticed there by the Nobel Laureate Sir Peter Medawar, who kindled his early interests in immunology.

Two other major influences of Frank Cox and Keith Vickerman, national giants in protozoology, are each worthy of mention. After a short post-doctoral period at The National Institute for Medical Research at Mill Hill, it was Keith who was responsible for attracting Stephen to the University of Glasgow in 1972 as Lecturer in Zoology. Stephen was to stay at Glasgow for the whole of his academic career, rising to Dean of the Faculty of Science. It was Frank, upon his retirement in 2000, who passed the Editorship of *Parasitology* on to Stephen.

Without doubt, Stephen's leadership embraced the best of what an evolving digital technology in publishing could offer. Today from his own admission, however, he feels the twittersphere is something best left to younger parasitologists, for he now gladly looks forward to spending more time tending his specialist floral collection of *Fuchsia*. With a wink to the digital world, I invite you to see him in action, pen in hand and eye for detail, as a national judge for the British Fuchsia Society https://www.cambridge.org/core/blog/2019/10/14/meet-the-editors-qa-with-professor-stephen-phillips-mbe-editor-in-chief-of-parasitology/.

It was with Stephens' keen eye for detail, and with help from Gavin Swanson, Cambridge University Press (CUP), that *Parasitology* was able to challenge successfully the 2009 Impact Factor (IF) of 1.607. From their queries, a technical mistake came to light, with an upward revision of the IF to 2.316. This placed *Parasitology* in position 8 out of 28 journals within the subject category, but what of today? In accordance with COVID-19 social distancing, the CUP team took advantage of webinar technology to celebrate Stephen's tenure online. We each congratulated him with anecdotes and accolades that he left the journal in a very strong place. You will be glad to know *Parasitology*'s IF is now 2.783, ranking 10th out of 39 similar journals.

Whilst it is easy to read the pro or con in any journal's IF statistics, Stephens' guiding stewardship harks back to a philosophy of editors before, which stand a better test of time. *Parasitology* will be here to publish across the broadest range of this discipline. The journal continues to provide a prestigious international outlet for the work of all parasitologists, whatever branch of the subject they research, from parasite molecules from the smallest of the small to parasite effects of the largest of the large in global health and ecology.

In taking over the role of Editor-in-Chief, it is my ambition with our editorial team to further embrace and encourage parasitological scholarship from all parts of the globe. I steal by example Stephen's appreciation of plants, for I wish *Parasitology* to continue to serve all parasitologists, budding at whatever stage of their career, to better garden their potentials. Also worthy of note, another personal milestone will soon occur this September, Stephen and Judy will celebrate their 51st wedding anniversary. So, to close, we wish them both good health and continued happiness in the many years to come.

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EDITORS

Nuttall and Shipley 1908–1914
Nuttall 1915–1933
Keilin and Hindle 1934
Keilin 1935–1951
Keilin and Tate 1952–1963
Tate 1964–1968
Crofton 1968–1972
Crompton and Newton 1973–1981
Cox and Whitfield 1982–1986
Cox and Arme 1987–2000
Arme and Phillips 2000–2005
Arme, Phillips and Gasser 2005–2006
Phillips, Gasser and Chappell 2006–2011
Phillips, Chappell, Hemphill, Holland, Knox, Wastling 2011–2014
Phillips, Bell, Ellis, Hemphill, Holland, Knox, Wastling 2015
Phillips, Bell, Ellis, Hemphill, Holland, Wastling 2016
Phillips, Bell, Ellis, Hemphill, Holland, Stothard, Wastling 2017–2020
Phillips, Bell, Ellis, Hemphill, Rinaldi, Stothard, Wastling 2020
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